

Chapter 2

The Bus Director

Dr. Lee Roberson once said, "Everything rises and falls on leadership." I certainly believe that to be true. And because I believe it, I have made it a priority in my ministry to study the subject of leadership. I asked myself this question, "Who was the greatest leader in the Bible, apart from our Lord Jesus Christ?" the answer quickly came to mind. It was Moses, who led the millions of rebellious Jews through the wilderness to the Promised Land. As I studied this man's life in the Scriptures, I found some very interesting things about this great leader. Perhaps the most amazing thing I discovered was that Moses did not possess many of the characteristics that we would associate with great leaders, or with leadership in general. For instance:

1. Moses was not an orator.

Most of us would think that in order to be a good leader, one would have to be a great speaker, especially in a ministry like the bus ministry. But Moses was not a great speaker, nor even a good one. The Bible tells us in Exodus 4:10, *"And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor*

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since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Moses was slow of speech, meaning that he had great difficulty pronouncing words. When Moses spoke, his words came out slowly. He would drag out a sentence. For sure, he was not an orator. The truth is, you do not have to be a great speaker to be a leader.

2. Moses did not have any self-confidence.

We hear a lot nowadays about self-esteem and self-confidence and how important it is to a person who is a leader. And I suppose that it is of some benefit to a leader, but it is not mandatory. The Bible tells us in Exodus 4:1 that Moses did not believe he could perform this task that the Lord had given him. The Scripture says, "*And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.*" (Exodus 4:1)

The truth is, having no self-confidence will probably be more of an asset than a liability. When we think that we have arrived, that we have "it," we usually ignore the Lord and lean on our own understanding and strength. Moses' confidence lay in the Lord and not in himself.

3. Moses had very little self-control.

Even though Moses had not completely conquered his emotions, he was still one of the greatest leaders who ever lived. We often think that without temperance, we could never lead a group of volunteers. Moses had very little self-control according to the Bible. In Exodus 2:11,12 we read, "*And it came to pass in those*

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days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand." Moses had a hard time overcoming his emotions. That is why we read about him smiting the rock twice in the wilderness in Numbers chapter twenty after God had told him to smite it only once. I am saying that Moses had a hard time controlling his temper.

Moses was certainly one of the most unlikely men in the world to become a great leader. But history tells us that he was, in fact, the great deliverer of the nation of Israel. The thing that made Moses a great leader was not any natural ability that he possessed. So, what was it that made this man the great leader that he was? If it was not oratory skills, if it was not self-confidence, if it was not self-control, what was it? It was his persistence in living a great truth. Moses was consumed by a great truth. As he lived that truth, he led millions to follow him. Let me explain:

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. once said that he had never known a man to do anything worthwhile who had not first come under the influence of a great truth. This was exactly what had happened to Moses. God had told Moses that He would use him to deliver Israel out of Pharaoh's hands and that he would lead them to the Promised Land. God told Moses that He would give him a cloud by day and a fire by night to follow. This did not require him to be a speaker, have charisma, be self-confident or have self-control. All he had to do was be obedient to the truth that God had given him, which was to follow the cloud by day and the fire by night. As Moses was led by God, he in turn led millions. So we learn a very important principle. *Leadership is perfected by followship.*

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The greatness of Moses lay not in his natural abilities, but in his willingness to be obedient to the great truth that God had given him. All he had to do was follow the cloud by day and the fire by night. We must learn to lead by following. As we follow God's commands to win souls and to teach His Word, our leadership will develop automatically. Now, certainly I believe that any and every leader should work on communication skills and he ought to work on being temperate. And I believe that every leader should read as much as he can about leadership and look for characteristics that he can add to his own character, but I am also saying that all of these characteristics are not essential. What is essential is the leader's willingness to obey that truth. It is the leader's willingness to follow that enables him to lead.

Now let us pretend that we were with Moses to watch how the leadership of this great man unfolded. God had told Moses that after Israel was set free, He wanted Moses to lead them to the Promised Land. God also told Moses that He would give him a cloud by day and a fire by night to follow. This cloud and pillar of fire would lead him, as he in turn led the children of Israel. All that Moses had to do was move when the cloud moved and stop when the cloud stopped if it was daytime, and move when the fire moved and stop when the fire stopped if it was night. So all the people are standing on the other side of the Red Sea awaiting the next set of instructions. All of a sudden, Moses takes off following a cloud that was moving into the wilderness. Someone said, "Where is he going? He is following that cloud!" "To where?" someone else said. "I don't know," was the response. "Let's go see," said another, and before you know it, there were millions of people following Moses into the wilderness. Moses simply obeyed the great truth that God had given him and the rest is history.

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Please don't miss this! It was not Moses' intellect or wit that drew the people. It was not his oratorical skills or his disciplined life that summoned them. It was the fact that Moses was consumed with a great truth that compelled him to give his life to it. Moses was going somewhere. And people like people who are going somewhere. What we need today are people in God's work who have been consumed by a truth that God has given them.

You do not have to possess a great number of abilities to be a bus director, but you do have to be a leader. And to be a leader in the bus ministry, or any other ministry for that matter, you must come under the influence of a great truth. As you follow that truth, people will follow you. Keep in mind that most leaders don't know that they are leaders. They only see themselves following a great truth. They follow a cloud or pillar of fire that God has given them to lead them, and even though they cannot see in the darkness, the light of a great truth shows them the way.

Do you want to be a great bus director? Become consumed by the truth that little boys and girls who die without Christ will burn in an eternal Hell. Become consumed by the truth that Jesus has paid their sin debt and all they need is the message of the Gospel to be preached to them.

You can read all the books on leadership that you can find and go to all the seminars on leadership that are given, but until you come under the influence of a great truth, you will never become a great leader.

If you go to your bus workers, consumed about the fact that those bus kids have very little if any hope without you and your workers, you will not have any trouble getting them to follow you.

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It has been my practice for many years to rise at 5:00 A.M. and spend time with God looking for that cloud to follow - a great truth that consumes my soul and heart. It doesn't take long and I am so excited that I can hardly stand it. I can't wait to get to the work. I simply live the truth that God has given me, and as I do, I find that people follow me. I am saying that when you are consumed by a great truth, leadership happens. As you go about the work of winning souls and helping families, someone will say, "Where is he going?" and someone else will say, "Let's go see," and before you know it, people are joining the bus ministry and hundreds are being brought to church.

Your bus ministry's success is going to depend entirely on you. Let me give you some suggestions that will help you become consumed about the bus ministry.

A. Periodically, take a drive through your area looking at all of the people who need to know Christ.

This alone will do the trick most of the time. There is something about "seeing" that affects the heart. The Bible says about Jesus, in Matthew 14:14, *"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick."* Jesus went first, then He saw, then He was moved!

I am always amazed as I drive around our city. There are thousands and thousands of people everywhere. They are just wandering through life like sheep who have no shepherd. They are facing life's problems without a clue of how they can over-

come them. They are groping in darkness without a light to show them the way. They need someone who will have compassion toward them and lead them to the One who is the answer - Jesus! They need to know about a Great Physician who can heal their infirmities and comfort their broken hearts. They simply need Jesus.

B. Believe that your bus ministry is the answer to your city's needs.

The bus ministry is a tool that we use to get people to Jesus. And I might say that in the twenty plus years that I have been saved and serving God, it is the most effective ministry in the local New Testament church. That motivates me! That drives me to get those buses on the road and make a plea for servants of God to man them. That drives me to raise the money needed to keep this great soul winning arm of the church alive and vibrant. That drives me to gladly accept the troubles and aggravation that come with such a ministry.

The bus ministry is the answer to my city's needs. It is the answer to getting boys and girls to church who would otherwise not have the opportunity to come. It is the answer to reaching their parents so that changes can take place in the home.

I believe that the bus ministry is the answer to my city's needs. I know that there are critics out there who do not think that the bus ministry is important. I know that there are some who think that the bus ministry is too expensive or too much trouble. But that's okay. I disagree with them. I believe that kids are people, too, and that they have souls, too, and that they need a Saviour, too. And I know that kids become adults who will someday be the supporters

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of the church. And if one child gets saved after hundreds of dollars have been spent and hundreds of hours have been worked, then it is well worth it. The bus ministry is a powerful soul winning tool in the church. It can be used to change the lives of hundreds and thousands of people in your city. I believe that with all my heart. I believe our city needs our bus ministry.

C. Plan your bus meeting with the same detail that you would plan a major conference.

Now I know that you cannot spend large amounts of money on a bus meeting like you might on a conference, but you can plan with as great detail as you would a major conference. I believe that all good things come to those who prepare. If you plan for success, you will enjoy it. If you work for success, you will achieve it. Dr. Wendall Evans, President of Hyles-Anderson College, used to say in leadership class:

- ◆ Plan your work.
- ◆ Work your plan.
- ◆ Don't get sidetracked.

I am saying that if you plan your bus meeting with as much detail as you would a major conference, you will see the results of your labor. The truth is, the bus meeting is a revival meeting for your bus workers. It will prepare them mentally, emotionally, and spiritually for the service of leading boys and girls and men and women to the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. Read your Bible faithfully, thinking about your bus workers.

As you do this, the Holy Spirit will reveal to you the needs of your bus workers for that week. He will impress upon you exactly what you should preach. He will guide you in preparing for each particular bus meeting.

Remember that the bus director is the most important person in the bus ministry. It is his leadership that will determine the success or failure of the bus ministry. His willingness to follow the cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night will help him lead his workers into the wonderful will of God and help them see the mighty arm of God that is willing to save.

It is the bus director's job to lead the bus workers, so it is imperative that he becomes consumed by a great truth and follow it.

Principles to Remember

- ◆ Everything rises and falls on leadership.
- ◆ Leadership is perfected by followship.
- ◆ Every great leader has, at some time in his life, come under the influence of a great truth.